



**Queensland University of Technology**  
Brisbane Australia

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[Watson, Amanda H. A.](#) (2006) Facilitating training in communication and development in Papua New Guinea. *Contemporary PNG Studies: DWU Research Journal*, 4, pp. 31-46.

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## **Facilitating training in communication and development in Papua New Guinea**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the experiences of the author in writing, implementing, and evaluating a course on communication and development. This new course is a central theoretical component in the revised curriculum of the Communication Arts department at Divine Word University, in Madang, Papua New Guinea. It is hoped that this paper may be of some value to others who intend to teach development theories to communication specialists in the developing world.

### **Introduction**

Up until recently, the training provided by the Communication Arts department at Divine Word University was practical and vocational, focusing on media reporting, and neglecting any examination of communication for development. There was, therefore, a need to incorporate the paradigm of communication for sustainable development into the curriculum. If good practice is instilled amongst students at the training level, then this may evolve into positive development outcomes for Papua New Guinea.

This paper follows on from previous research into the curriculum of the Communication Arts department at Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea. This prior research determined a need for a stronger academic component of the courses offered, and more emphasis on development and communication issues.

A detailed case study explores the implementation of a course on communication and development for degree students. This course is the central theoretical module in a new academic strand that focuses on development and the wider context of knowledge building and critical thinking in communication training. The paper assesses the course's impact on the attitudes and perceptions of students, and whether or not this has impacted upon their career goals.

### **South Pacific communication training**

In the South Pacific region, there is a "lack of professional training of journalists, poor education standards, [and media practitioners have a] lack of knowledge of the political and social institutions" (Robie, 2004a:9). Nonetheless, journalists are aware of their collective role as a "watchdog of democracy" (Robie, 2005:30).

Robie's research has found that "tertiary education has a critical influence on how Pacific journalists [...] in the region practice their profession and perceive their political and social role in a developing society faced with the challenges of globalization" (Robie, 2004b:1). Therefore it is vitally important that the tertiary programs available provide a solid grounding in the issues facing the development of the countries within the region.

Training institutions include the University of the South Pacific, which commenced its journalism program in 1994 (Moore, 1995:64), and the Pacific Islands News Association, which coordinates short courses (ibid:64). Samoa Polytechnic has a one-year, full-time course called Certificate of Achievement in Journalism, which aims to provide students with basic journalistic writing and interviewing skills, in both the Samoan language and English ([www.sampol.edu.ws](http://www.sampol.edu.ws)).

### **Papua New Guinean communication training**

Papua New Guinea's media training primarily takes place at the University of Papua New Guinea in Port Moresby, and Divine Word University in Madang. The Media Council of Papua New Guinea also provides some training, usually short courses. However, according to Rooney et al, "[s]hort-term training courses and workshops for journalists [...] have had limited impact in transferring skills" (Rooney et al, 2004). In a recent survey of Papua New Guinean journalists, Robie found that only 5% of the respondents had participated in a short course (Robie, 2005:28). However, 81% of the respondents possessed either a degree or a diploma, and 70% had majored in journalism (ibid:28-29). This finding indicates the importance of the two Universities in providing employees for Papua New Guinean media organisations.

Up until recently, the training provided by the Communication Arts department at Divine Word University was practical and vocational. In the department, "journalism has been treated as a craft to be learned by hands-on practice" (DWU, 2002:56).

### **The developing world difference**

In developed countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the USA, debates amongst journalism educators explore issues such as whether or not journalism graduates have a satisfactory understanding of historical events (Van Heekeren, 2005) and whether or not university courses are meeting the needs of industry (Green, 2005). These discourses are valuable, but have less relevance in the developing world context. Green argues that areas of general knowledge which are valuable for journalism graduates, are "statistics, economics, history, political theory and philosophy" (ibid:191). In developing countries such as Papua New Guinea, these areas are important, provided that they are based in the context of an overarching understanding of development.

The media in the South Pacific region deal with issues such as “sensitive areas of health reporting, especially the growing presence of HIV/AIDS” (Smiles, 2001:xi) in different ways to their neighbours in Australia and New Zealand. Due to the substantial cultural differences within the region, and even within countries such as Papua New Guinea (Reilly, 2004:480), journalists must develop “sensitivities and understandings in just the same way as reporters ‘from overseas’” (Smiles, 2001:xi). In any setting, “every journalist should acknowledge and accept the responsibility that comes with the media’s potential to affect people’s lives” (Burns, 2003:71), and yet, in a context where many people are living with very little, as in the case of developing nations, this responsibility is even more heightened.

### **The need for training in communication and development**

In Papua New Guinea, “colonial legacies in journalism attitudes and training [...] and dominance of Western news values have all contributed to the production of news content that is not reflecting the needs of the people” (Rooney et al, 2004). There is, therefore, a need to educate media practitioners in the paradigm of communication for sustainable development. If good practice is instilled amongst students at the training level, then this may evolve into positive development outcomes.

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development has commenced. This indicates the important role that education is perceived to play in bringing about lasting improvements in societies and people’s lives. It is believed that “education is our best chance of promoting and rooting the values and behaviours which sustainable development implies” (UNESCO, 2004:14).

### **Papua New Guinea’s developmental status**

Papua New Guinea “faces serious development challenges” (Papoutsaki and Sharp, 2005). The country’s progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is mixed. “Although progress has been made in some areas, in others there has been mainly stagnation or even deterioration. Overall, progress has been disappointing” (Government of Papua New Guinea and United Nations in Papua New Guinea, 2004:41).

There is an alarming new challenge emerging for the country; “the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which threatens to undo all progress that has so far been made” (ibid:41). Substantial awareness campaigns about HIV/AIDS are underway currently in Papua New Guinea; managed and supported by many non-government organisations, aid agencies and the government. Much energy is being devoted to these campaigns, and this is one area where communications graduates could be employed.

There are significant disparities between the urban and rural communities in Papua New Guinea. Most people live in rural settings (ibid:6) and yet the “rural sector is not served by a well-developed infrastructure” (ibid:5). Church-based

and non-government organisations often provide basic services, such as health posts and schools, where the government services do not meet the needs.

In addition, cultural and linguistic differences are substantial. It has been found that “the most important reason for disparities in provincial development in Papua New Guinea was differences in ethnic diversity from province to province” (Reilly, 2004:480). This means that the “more diverse provinces had significantly lower development levels than more homogenous ones” (ibid:480).

On a regional scale, this finding may indicate why Papua New Guinea performs less well on development indicators than some neighbouring states; it consists of a much more diverse population, “making it on some indicators the most heterogeneous state anywhere in the world” (ibid:480).

### **Development and Papua New Guinea’s media**

Over twenty years ago, Phinney found that a high percentage of Papua New Guinean journalists felt that “journalists should help the government develop the nation” (Phinney, 1985:44). And yet, Rooney et al argue that “[a]t present, the journalism being delivered by media organisations in PNG does not include much high quality development-related material” (Rooney et al, 2004). It is felt that the training given to potential journalists plays a crucial role in this scenario; “We do not see the availability of equipment and technology as central to the issue; financial and personnel issues are generally far more significant causes of poor performance in the sector” (ibid).

Nonetheless, those working in the media industry in Papua New Guinea possess “a greater acceptance of a more active role for media in development” (Robie, 2005:30) than journalists in Fiji (ibid:30), and therefore it is timely that the discussion of this role be incorporated into the available training.

### **Divine Word University’s Communication Arts department**

This paper follows on from previous research into the curriculum of the Communication Arts department at Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea. This prior research determined a need for a stronger academic component of the courses offered, including a greater emphasis on development and communication issues. (Rooney, 2003, McManus, 2004a, McManus, 2004b, McManus and Papoutsaki, 2004, Rooney et al, 2004, Papoutsaki and Sharp, 2005)

There is a shift away from a purely vocational offering, towards the inclusion of courses providing students with a theoretical framework and understanding. Practical skills such as layout and design, and radio production, are still taught. However, in addition, students are able to build upon their knowledge of the world and Papua New Guinea’s place in it. They are encouraged to think critically about the information they receive. It is hoped that the practical and

theoretical courses will complement one another, in order to achieve a more holistic approach to communication training.

“The widely acknowledged weakness of the curriculum was its lack of general education and academic courses. There has been an overwhelming response from all stakeholders in favour of including more academic units” (Papoutsaki and Sharp, 2005).

The need for a more balanced approach to the teaching provided by the department was acknowledged by a graduate, who reflected, “[m]ore emphasis should have been given to theory. DWU has always been practical about its journalism. I reckon a balanced input on theory would be good” (McManus, 2004b:21).

Research further indicated that there should be a strong focus in the curriculum on development issues, “which could prepare graduates to address the communication needs of a developing country and contribute to the development of a civil society” (Papoutsaki and Sharp, 2005).

### **A new course on communication and development**

This case study will explore the implementation of a course on communication and development for degree students. (DWU’s Communication Arts department offers a two-year diploma, and selected students must complete a further two years of study to be awarded with a degree.) This course, Communication and Development, is the central theoretical module in a new academic strand, which focuses on development and the wider context of knowledge building, and critical thinking in communication training.

The course’s name was carefully chosen. It is not a course designed to provide skills training in development communication. Instead, it aims to empower the students to consider the various schools of thought, and make their own decisions about what they wish to practice.

### **Other development and communication courses**

In 1960, the first communication course was offered in the Philippines ([www.uplb.edu.ph](http://www.uplb.edu.ph)). Now, the College of Development Communication at the University of Philippines Las Banos campus offers courses such as development journalism, education communication and science communication (ibid).

Between 1968 and 1983, The Press Foundation of Asia focused its training activities on “the discipline of development journalism” (PFA, 1984:2). As early as 1969, PFA was offering courses on development and economic writing (ibid:9).

A substantial survey of communication education in Asia was conducted against the backdrop of “major growth and transformations” (Hwa and

Ramanathan, 2000:3) in the information and communication sectors. For Asian communicators, fast technological change and access to vast amounts of information form the backdrop to their work (ibid:1-7). In Papua New Guinea, by contrast, many people live in isolated areas, and do not even have access to mainstream media, telephones and reliable electricity supplies, let alone Internet and other digital technologies.

In the Pacific, development and communication courses have existed at the University of Papua New Guinea since the early 1980s and at the University of the South Pacific since the mid 1990s. This could explain why just less than half of all working journalists in Papua New Guinea identify with the concept of development journalism (Robie, 2005:31), and they seem to have some understanding of the concept (ibid:31-32).

An earlier curriculum at Divine Word University was “based on the development communication model developed by Chris Maslog from the Philippines in the late 1980s” (McManus and Papoutsaki, 2004). However, this program lacked relevance to the Papua New Guinean context, with “constant references to studies conducted in the Philippines” (ibid). Given more time, and a longer commitment from qualified personnel, it is possible that this program may have been successful (ibid). Nonetheless, it “lacked the support of the media sector” (ibid). The current curriculum approach attempts to combine development theories and concepts with the existing practical skills training.

### **Preparation, research and writing the course**

My research indicated that the students needed to be given a broad initial insight into the various development theories. Each development theory correlates to a communication model, and so these were explained to the students and discussed. This theoretical understanding, which underpins practices such as development communication and development journalism, was a necessary part of this course, as the students had not received any prior teaching on development.

This is not to say that they didn’t have some knowledge of development. The majority of them would have been affected by development issues in their lives, and in reality they had a much more substantial understanding of the impacts of development projects and programs than I did. Indeed, I emphasised with the students on numerous occasions, particularly at the outset of the course, that they were the experts, not me. But their real-life experience needed some grounding in theory to be truly useful.

### **Implementing the course**

From the outset, I encouraged the students to be critical and disagree with me. I was very conscious of the fact that I was a white Australian coming into Papua New Guinea, thirty years after the country had gained its independence from Australia, and I’d been asked to write and teach a course on development. So I did encourage the students to be critical of the Australian influence if they felt

it was warranted. I made it clear to the students that there are some ways in which I think the Australian influence in Papua New Guinea has not been positive. And indeed there were some comments in classes that expressed dissatisfaction with the legacy left behind by the Australian administration, or perpetuated or even exacerbated by the post-colonial influence.

### **Development theories**

At the start of the course, students were introduced to three key theories of development, a week at a time; modernisation, dependency, and multiplicity (Servaes and Malikhaio, 2004). When modernisation theory was introduced first, the students related to it and thought it made sense. This was explored in some detail, before dependency theory was introduced.

Dependency theory was more difficult to explain to the students, who had a limited understanding of the global system prior to commencing this course. The students seemed to have a limited understanding of their place in the world, and the impact that outside influences might have had on Papua New Guinean lives. Nonetheless, Kukari and Ogoba's argument that "capitalism [...] is fast eroding the importance and values of Papua New Guinean cultures" (Kukari and Ogoba, 1999:55) helped to elucidate the discussions. For Kukari and Ogoba, the exploitation of Papua New Guinean resources continued after colonial times, with the idea of modern development being "embraced by our political leaders at the time of independence in 1975, without questioning" (ibid:55). True dependency theorists, they argue that this notion of modern development "provides the rationale for the continued domination and suppression of Papua New Guineans and their cultures" (ibid:55).

The third development theory, multiplicity (or community development), invites the practitioner to take cultural differences into account, and this idea is highly relevant to the Papua New Guinean setting, with its many and varied cultures (Reilly, 2004:480). Once the students understood this theory, they connected with its language and rhetoric well.

### **A major hurdle**

"When expatriate academics teach Papua New Guineans, there is often a cultural dynamic at play that is inconsistent with that operating in 'Western' universities." (McLaughlin, 1997:89)

Some experiences I had whilst teaching this course highlighted our differing points of view. For example, during the fourth teaching week, I noticed that the class seemed reluctant to break into discussion groups when I asked them to do an activity. At the conclusion of the class, two students approached me and expressed dissatisfaction with the course. The students stated that the course wasn't challenging enough for them.

At the start of the next class, I sat all the students (23 in total) in a circle, thanked them for the initial feedback, and asked them to feel free to comment



upon all aspects of the course. What followed was an hour filled with many long silences, but also some varied comments from a range of students. I was struck by the fact that numerous comments were made which reflected more upon the process of working in groups and group dynamics, rather than the teaching style or content of the course itself. I had been organising the tutorials so that the students had many opportunities for discussing concepts, ideas and scenarios in groups. I had done this as I felt it would allow a chance for them to draw on their own particular knowledge and perspectives, given that the students come from an array of different geographical, cultural and educational backgrounds. However, it emerged during this feedback session that the group-work techniques of the students were in need of some attention. Late in the hour, I asked the circle if they'd ever had any teambuilding training, and the answer was a resounding 'no'.

It is significant to note that there had been one course introduced in the Communication Arts department the previous year, which had an academic component, and the convenor of that course, originally from Europe, found that she was faced with a similarly negative reaction from the students at about the same stage of the course. A discussion was held with them, and there followed a concerted effort to understand the different teaching and learning styles in the classroom. By the end of the course, the students seemed reconciled to the novel techniques introduced by this academic (Papoutsaki, communication with the author, February 2005.)

### **Development communication**

Having introduced the key development theories, and their related communication models (Servaes, 2000, Freire, 1970, Melkote, 1991, and Gunardi et al, 1985), the course moved into an examination of development communication. Gunardi et al define development communication as "communication with a social conscience" (Gunardi et al, 1985:50). In this course, development communication's aim to achieve goals was emphasised (ibid:50-51). Several types of development communication were explained (Servaes, 2000:137), and strategies for effectively implementing development communication were discussed (Gunardi et al, 1985:51-52).

Most of the students were challenged by the introduction of this new concept. A real-life example of a community-based radio program was used to demonstrate the application of the concept. Some students remained either non-committal, or uncertain as to what exactly is envisaged by the concept, but others could see how it could be applied in rural and remote settings in Papua New Guinea. Nonetheless, substantial barriers, such as geographical isolation, lack of effective road infrastructure, and significant cultural variation, were frequently raised in classroom discussions. These barriers were seen as potential impediments to the effectiveness of development communication in Papua New Guinea.

### **Development journalism**

This led us to discuss the notion of development journalism. Development journalism promotes development outcomes (Gunaratne, 1996:68) and involves “sincere association with the grass-roots” (ibid:68). However, it is acknowledged that “the term encompasses at least three differing understandings of the appropriate relationship between journalists, the people and the state” (Romano, 1998:80). The students and I attempted to analyse the relationship between this concept and the role of the journalist in Papua New Guinea. Should journalists in Papua New Guinea be objective, or should they practice development journalism?

“Social change is central to development journalism’s mission. Western journalism’s so-called ‘commitment to objectivity’ is replaced by a commitment to the local community.” (McManus, 2004a:19)

Up until this point in their training at Divine Word University, students had been taught about the importance of having balanced and objective stories. The concept of development journalism was a new one for them.

“The blind adherence to and acceptance of Western style of reporting reflects the Western-influenced journalism training that journalists and editors receive in PNG” (Rooney et al, 2004)

### **The big debate**

When debating objectivity versus development journalism, some students didn’t necessarily see the two concepts as negating one another. They were more interested in attempting to design their own model for journalism in Papua New Guinea. Far from viewing objectivity and development journalism practices as being in contradiction with one another, the students wished to discuss how elements of the two could be utilised to form a completely Papua New Guinean form of journalism. This practice was envisaged as being suited to the unique conditions of the country.

Much discussion ensued over several lessons about the underlying values and the main aims of this new school of thought. Ultimately, it is a process that these young people will have to continue every day of their careers; “should I present this story in a certain light, with the best interests of my people at heart, or should I remain distanced from the community in an attempt to be unbiased?” There are no easy answers, and I hope that the graduating students continue to ponder such questions as they move into the workforce. It is valuable for them to be able to consider their own motives when they are working in the communication field.

The concept of nation building and attempts at forming or strengthening a sense of national unity were debated at length. This is an important issue in Papua New Guinea, due to the internal diversity highlighted by Reilly (2004).

In Robie's research, a respondent stated "[u]sing journalism as a tool in nation building" (Robie, 2005:32), when considering the role of Papua New Guinean journalists.

### **Academic and critical thinking**

The introduction of academic and critical thinking is a comparatively new way of learning for the students. I gave them readings each week, but tried to make them relevant and interesting; magazine articles, extracts from papers, a section of a chapter under a relevant heading etc. Some thought this was too basic, with one very bright student in particular feeling under-challenged and insulted by the low level at which I was targeting the readings. Meanwhile others admitted they weren't even completing the short readings that I'd been providing. Evidently, for some, this new way of learning (reading and then discussing) was a challenge. However, those students who felt that I was targeting the material at too low a level sought more challenges in the course.

To overcome these differing requirements of the class members, I created an optional readings folder and placed this into the department's resource room. At least one relevant academic paper was placed in this folder for each week's topic, and this seemed to work well, with numerous students looking through this folder outside of class time.

In exploring different models of communication, and allowing the students to consider their own practice in a reflective manner, this course is "extending critical evaluation skills and widening cultural knowledge" (de Burgh, 2003:98). The course does not "incorporate the formal development of critical thinking" (Withnall, 1996:107), but it is helping the students to develop the "intellectual confidence" (de Burgh, 2003:110) to be able to be effective communicators.

### **Language**

Language is one of the major causes of the educational difficulties experienced by Papua New Guinean students (McLaughlin, 1997). These tertiary students started their education with primary school teachers who are Papua New Guinean nationals, teaching in English, "many of whom have a tenuous grasp of English" (McLaughlin, 1997:94). In order to survive and progress through primary and secondary schooling, students have developed techniques for rote learning (ibid:96). Therefore, it is challenging for students to be asked to read, deliberate and discuss issues, especially when the texts and the classroom conversations are all in English.

The Communication Arts students must have a B grade in year 12 English to be eligible for entry into the course. This is a higher standard of English ability than most of the other departments in the university require. After two years of studies, there is a further selection process to limit the entry into the third year of study (towards the degree). Selection criteria for entry into the degree program include critical thinking, academic competence, and language skills.

Nonetheless, even in third year, there are varying levels of competency with the English language. I tried to make lectures clear, repeating key points for emphasis. I re-phrased key information. When asked about the lectures delivered, comments on the course feedback forms ranged from “[the lecturer] spoke too quickly and was hard to understand”, to “lectures were boring and repetitive”. Evidently, those students with advanced English comprehension skills found this repetition uninteresting. Others were challenged by the pace of the introduction of new concepts, combined with my Australian accent and speech patterns.

### **Evaluation of the course**

Communication and Development aimed to empower the students to consider the various development theories and their corresponding communication models, in order to allow them the opportunity to consider their own perspectives and make their own decisions about what they wish to practice.

As a forum for considering concepts, theories and practices, this course achieved its aim. However, it would be presumptuous to suggest that one 15-week long course has provided all the answers for these future communications professionals. Their analysis of how communication interacts with development issues will be an ongoing, lifelong process.

In assessments, the students performed well, demonstrating a level of critical engagement with the literature. As in any group, there were those who displayed a high level of analysis, whereas others progressed satisfactorily. The assessment tasks included a class test, a critical response essay, an oral presentation and an essay. The final marks ranged from low 50s to high 80s, demonstrating a desirable range.

### **Students’ attitudes to development**

It is significant to note that, before commencing this course, the degree students had a limited understanding of the issues involved in development, despite many of them being experienced media practitioners.

All of the department’s staff members surveyed felt that there was an improvement in students’ ability to define the term development, and their awareness of development issues. This change occurs as the students progress from the start of first year to the end of the degree, and it has also been strengthened as new subjects such as this one have been introduced into the curriculum.

A number of comments written on the students’ feedback forms indicated that the students appreciated the value of the course, and felt that their perception of development had been enhanced.

*This course is very helpful and must be taught in this university always, as long as CA department exists. (3<sup>rd</sup> year)*

*Personally, I really enjoyed this course. I have never been so critical about development and communication before. [...] I wish to work for an organisation that communicates for or to develop. (3<sup>rd</sup> year)*

The students have come to understand, through completing this course, that they can make a contribution to Papua New Guinea's development.

*The course was great and I learned more. It has help [sic] me to realise my role as a media person and that I can contribute tremendously to my country. (3<sup>rd</sup> year)*

### **How DWU Communication Arts students are changing their career goals**

A substantial survey of current and past students of the Communication Arts department was conducted previously (McManus 2004b). This survey revealed some striking results about the career goals of the students. "Only 18% [of respondents] expressed a strong desire to work in the mainstream media" (ibid:27). This seems to validate the move towards a wider curriculum, which provides students with critical thinking skills and a broader general knowledge.

It is interesting to note that Robie's research found that almost 3 out of 4 Papua New Guinean journalists were attracted to the profession primarily as it enables them to communicate knowledge to the people (Robie, 2004b:14). This noble aspiration could also be fulfilled through working in a communications role in a non-government organisation.

Indeed, journalist and lecturer Kevin Pamba believes that there has been a change in the career aspirations of the students, as a result of the changes in the Communication Arts department's curriculum. He states "most second years for example appear interested in work outside of the mainstream media" (survey conducted by the author, August 2005).

### **This course in future years**

One student commented in their feedback form that this essential course should be "taught by a national who is passionate about bringing positive change to my country". This is a valid point, and indeed the department's plan is that a Papua New Guinean staff member will co-teach this subject in 2006, and then teach it independently in future years.

### **Further expansion of the DWU Communication Arts curriculum**

Given the changing career goals of the students, and the increasing number of graduates who are working in non-government organisations, another course is now being added to the department's curriculum. It builds on the critical

thinking skills and general knowledge developed in courses such as the one focused on in this paper. This course, Communication Skills for NGO Workers, stimulates debate about the role that non-government organisations play in civil society. In the case of Papua New Guinea, non-government organisations are significant service providers, particularly in rural areas, and can be important in the distribution of information. This course provides students with practical skills, which will be useful for them when they take on communication roles in such organisations. It complements the other courses already on offer. The new course is being implemented for the first time in 2006.

Complementing these two courses, the development stream in the Communication Arts department also includes a course called Asia-Pacific Development Issues, which explores issues such as population, poverty, migration, and urbanisation.

To complete the curriculum revision, an elective course in this development stream may be devised in the near future. Possible ideas are still being considered, but one possibility is that it may examine culture and communication. This course would be particularly relevant here, given Papua New Guinea's substantial cultural diversity (Reilly, 2004). Providing an elective course would further strengthen the development stream.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the review of the Communication Arts curriculum, there is definitely a change in the students' level of understanding, and clarity of articulation, about development issues. It is clear from classroom discussions that there are no universal definitions of the terms development, development communication and development journalism, particularly in the Papua New Guinean context. The students are being challenged to consider the role of the journalist in Papua New Guinea, to think of Papua New Guinea's place in the global system, and to make assessments about events occurring within its borders.

This course is a key theoretical component in the revised curriculum, and it will be enhanced through the participation of a Papua New Guinean lecturer, who can add more understanding of the country's social and political climate and history. There should remain, however, continued acknowledgement that the students will bring to the classroom a varied array of perspectives on the development issues being discussed. The debate will continue about the role of development journalism, as opposed to objectivity, in media practice.

Having completed this course, and the other academic courses in the curriculum, graduates offer much more to their chosen workplace than simply a toolbox of practical skills. They have not only a greater theoretical underpinning to their general knowledge, but they also have strengthened critical thinking skills.

In addition, the students are broadening their conceptions of their future career paths. The Communication Arts degree from Divine Word University is now providing graduates with wider choices. They are no longer being trained to simply be journalists, carrying around notepads, sound recorders and video cameras. Many are now pursuing careers in non-government organisations. They have a broader worldview, and will be able to make a substantial contribution towards Papua New Guinea's development. They are able to examine the world from a more informed perspective, and have options opening up to them. Why couldn't one of these graduates one day become the United Nations Secretary General? As their ability to perceive themselves in new ways is enhanced, such outcomes can be possible.

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An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2005 Journalism Education Association Conference, 'Journalism and the Public', hosted by Griffith University.